

# Newbury, MA – Fire Chief



## Position Statement

Newbury, Massachusetts (pop. 6,716) is a small, historic town located on the edge of Essex County. Situated alongside the Atlantic Ocean, the Town provides considerable natural beauty for residents and visitors. Newbury was settled by members of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Today, the Town includes the villages of Plum Island, Byfield, and Newbury Center (Old Town). Newburyport used to be included in Newbury until it became its own town in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Newbury's rich history can be found throughout the villages via its abundance of historic houses, landmarks, and mills. The Town is home to the oldest boarding school in America, The Governors Academy. Students in Newbury are served by the Newbury Elementary School, The Governors Academy, Triton Regional School District, Whittier Regional Technical High School, and Essex Technical High School. Newbury is made up of 26.3 square miles of



land. The Town is managed by a Town Administrator and five-member Select Board who are elected for three-year terms. Newbury is in good financial condition, with strong financial reserves, a manageable debt level, and AAA bond rating.

The Town of Newbury is seeking a new Fire Chief/Assistant Director of Emergency Management following the recent retirement of a Chief who dedicated 36 years to the community. The ideal candidate for the position will be a highly skilled individual looking to be a strong leader for this highly visible department. The candidate will possess strong fire and emergency medical response, public safety, and emergency management skills. Historically two private, non-profit fire companies simultaneously served Newbury. These were eventually merged into a municipal department within the last decade. These companies still exist as the fundraising arms of the Department. The Chief needs to be able to run a Fire Department of both full-time and call firefighters. Under Massachusetts General Laws, the position operates as a Strong Chief. The next Fire Chief must be able to confidently continue the development of the Department. This may include a revision of standard operating procedures, training, and employee retention. One of the major challenges facing the Department is full-time staffing. Newbury received a federal grant (SAFER) to assist with the funding of two additional full-time firefighter positions but still struggles to ensure the appropriate staffing of the Department. In particular, the recruitment and retention of paramedic Firefighters will need to be addressed by the next Chief.

**Annual Salary: \$110,000.00+/-**, depending on qualifications. The Town of Newbury is an Equal Opportunity Employer.





## Town Finances

The FY24 Operating Budget was approved for \$23.4 million at the most recent Town Meeting. The Town is working to create a fiscally sustainable budget that stays within the limits of Proposition 2½ and does not rely on one-time funding sources. This will include managing fiscally sustainable collective bargaining agreements between the Town and the Town's three unions. Newbury wishes to remain an affordable place to live and a desirable place to operate businesses and is working to determine ways to financially achieve this goal.

The Town received \$2.1 million in ARPA Grant Funding which has so far been committed to the COA Senior Center, Newbury Food Pantry, Pearson Field Upgrades, Green Crab Removal, and Historic Records Preservation. Regarding revenue, the Town brings in about 77% of its revenue through property taxes, 9% in Local Receipts, 5% in State Aid, and 9% from other funding sources.

About 15% of Newbury's FY24 budget will be allocated for public safety. Public safety saw the second largest percentage increase from the previous fiscal year, which was largely due to Police Department training requirements. The Fire Department's operating budget was increased by 3% in FY24. The purchase or lease of an Urban Interface Firefighting vehicle (about \$650,000) has been delayed until FY25.

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## Ongoing Projects

*Long Term Capital Improvements:* Ongoing capital improvements to essential Town buildings remain a top priority for Newbury. The Police Station was recently renovated, and improvements have been made to the Senior Center. Attention will now be turned to improving Town Hall with improvements to the Fire Stations on the horizon.

*Roadway Improvements:* After years of chronic neglect, the Town has been working with the DPW to improve roadways and resurfacing. As of April 2023, 93% of required maintenance had been completed. The Roadway Improvement Program continues to repair and maintain town culverts. A Pavement Management Plan will be commissioned in the near future to ensure that long-term infrastructure needs are met, and additional funding sources are being identified.

*Larkin Dam Project:* The Town has secured additional funding for the decommissioning of the Larkin Dam to rehabilitate and restore passage for diadromous fish species and improve overall water quality.

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## Public Safety

The Public Safety Dispatch is operated by the Police Department for all Fire, Police, and Emergency Medical service needs. There are on average about 20,000 calls logged by the Emergency Communications department (which reports to the Chief of Police).



### Important Links:

- [Town of Newbury](#)
- [Fire Department](#)
- [Fire Department Website](#)
- [Fire Service Review 2016](#)
- [Newbury Transparency Center](#)
- [FY2024 Budget and Annual Report](#)
- [Fire Department News Blog](#)
- [Fire Dept. Facebook Page](#)

## Newbury Fire Department

The [Newbury Fire Department](#) is dedicated to serving The Town of Newbury, including Newbury/Old Town, Byfield, and Plum Island, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Department activities include effective and timely response of trained people and equipment to fire, medical, and hazardous event emergencies, as well as fire safety inspection and education activities. The Department currently includes six full-time firefighters and 42 call firefighters. During the day, four full-time firefighters are required for adequate staffing and on nights and weekends two full-time firefighters are required.

The FY24 Fire Department budget was approved for approximately \$1.39 million. The budget includes funding for 16.09 FTE positions. Requests for services by the Department has fluctuated in recent years. To date, in 2023, there have been 258 Non-Medical and 538 Medical service dispatches by the Department.

Dispatch Incidents: Non-Medical v. Medical		
	Non-Medical	Medical
2020	438	660
2021	396	727
2022	412	940

In 2016, the Town contracted with a consultant to produce a [Fire Service Management Letter](#), which provided an overview and perspective about issues the Newbury Fire Department was facing. Until 2015, there were two separate and distinct fire companies that provided services within the Town of Newbury. Through several years of Town Meeting action and the passing of special legislation, the two companies were merged and restructured into a municipal fire department. The Board of Fire Engineers was abolished.

One of the major recommendations in the Management Letter is the recruitment and retention of on-call personnel and to increase the number of active on-call firefighters. On average, for every five on-call firefighters recruited, two will remain active after a period of 48 months has elapsed. Exit interviews with employees have found that this is due to the increasing level of specialized skill required, which is time-consuming.

The Department currently has three pumpers, two aerial ladders, one tender/tanker, two wildland suppression vehicles, two ambulances and two fire stations. One of the fire stations was built in the 1960's and will require rehabilitation in the near future.



The Newbury Professional Firefighters contract, which began on July 1, 2021, will expire on June 30, 2024.

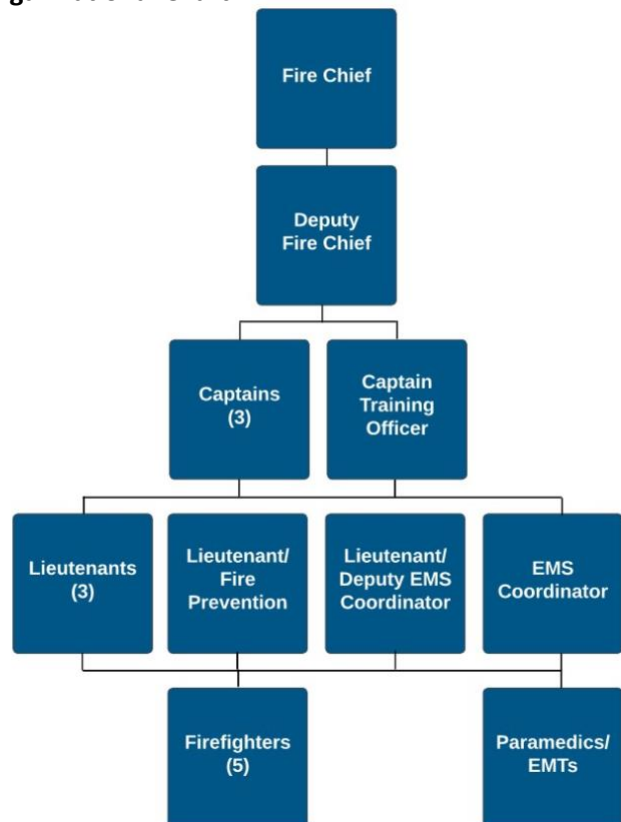
## The Position

The Fire Chief/Assistant Director of Emergency Management, for all intents and purposes, and in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, is a Strong Chief and will serve as a member of the Town's Executive Leadership Team. Exceptional leadership as well as sound financial and human capital management skills are basic expectations. The Fire Chief/Assistant Director of Emergency Management will be a major contributor to the continued development of comprehensive fire and emergency services and operations. The Chief's specific responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, the following: budget, staffing, administrative, public relations, operations, emergency management, and town-wide policy making. The Chief is supported by a Deputy Fire Chief, three Captains, and a Captain Training Officer.

## Minimum Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Minimum of a Post Secondary Degree in Fire Science, Public Administration, Management or related field.
- Certified as a Firefighter I/II, Fire Officer I, II, III, and Fire Instructor Level I.
- Minimum of 10 years of fire service experience and demonstration of a commitment towards continuing education and training.
- Must become certified as a Fire Officer Level IV and accredited as a Massachusetts Fire Chief within 18 months of appointment.
- Must complete Massachusetts Chief Fire Officer Training within 24 months of appointment.
- Holds self and staff accountable.
- Possess strong conflict resolution skills; ability to remain calm in a crisis.
- Strong communicator; active listener.
- Focuses on community service.
- Must possess ability to lead and motivate paid, paid call, and volunteer firefighters.
- Must possess extensive knowledge of local, state, and federal fire codes.
- Must possess thorough knowledge of emergency management guidelines and the ability to direct the activities of many individuals simultaneously during emergency situations.
- Must possess the ability to motivate personnel and build a spirit of teamwork, and ability to develop positive community relations.

### Organizational Chart



*This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.*





## How to Apply

Send cover letter and resumé via email, in a single PDF, in confidence by September 6, 2023, to:

[Apply@CommunityParadigm.com](mailto:Apply@CommunityParadigm.com)

**Subject: Newbury Fire Chief**

Any questions regarding the position or application process should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Managing Principal  
Community Paradigm Associates

[BLynch@CommunityParadigm.com](mailto:BLynch@CommunityParadigm.com)

978-621-6733

*The Town of Newbury is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

